

Priority Focus Areas Matrix

Issue	Underlying Need	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Action Steps	Completion Date	Data Measures
Sustainability						
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meet Court Exit Agreement commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintain and enhance accomplishmentsContinuous quality improvementMaintain funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stay out of courtAvoid federal government penaltiesMeasures of outcomes for children and families positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Clear communication of goalsStatewide focus on prioritiesConsideration of capacityEase data pulls for supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">	<ul style="list-style-type: none">	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Strengthening Workforce						
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Supervisor training and mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Workers need supervisors who can mentor and train them and who understand their work and their specific cases Supervisor need to understand how to be managers of a unitSupervisors need to work in collaboration with administration to achieve goals/ priorities of the agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Supervisors gain better understanding of their caseworkers' workCaseworkers understand how to manage their unit's workCaseworkers feel invested in accomplishing agency goals and prioritiesCaseworkers feel they have a voice in decision-making for agencyCaseworkers feel capable of balancing workers need with agency administration priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop better communication strategies between all levels of division so that people feel they understand what goals are, why we have them, what is expected of them and that they can provide input on what the goals are and how to accomplish them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">	<ul style="list-style-type: none">	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Qualified workforce Retention Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Retention of staffRecruitment of staffExperienced workforceConsistency for clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Longevity for staffMany seasoned workers available to supervise and/or mentor new staffFamilies/children don't have changes in workers mid-case	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Workload studyCareer ladderMeaningful recognition to employeesWidespread recognition (for all employees when they	<ul style="list-style-type: none">	<ul style="list-style-type: none">	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morale of agency employees is high because they are satisfied with their jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do well rather than a select few) • Helping workers find the casework roles that are the best fit for their abilities • Giving workers opportunity to give feedback on agency decisions • Consistent communication • Supervisor training 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety Model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent practice • Process clarity for decisions • Protection of children with least intrusive measures in order to minimize negative effects of interventions • Identify if child will achieve permanency • Communication with partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing Safety of children • Minimal negative impacts on family and child • Removals occur based on safety needs not risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of alternative response model • A safety assessment tool that helps guide decision making 	•	•	•
Permanency						
Specific Program Enhancement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Home Services • Kinship • TAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent statewide practice • Consistent statewide use and review issues (QCR) • Funding for services • Supported by new Child and Family Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define In-Home Services program practice so that there is consistency in practice and documentation • Better define Kinship program practice, and communicate to staff and kin families for better decision making and less trauma for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardize practice, case type code usage, and documentation expectations by developing clear and complete practice guidelines and emphasizing compliance with those guidelines • Training on new practice guidelines 	•	•	•

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand what services the regions are actually delivering (right now it unclear) Address needs of parents Be able to extract better and more complete data for evaluation of outcomes and other division needs 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFSR Data Element-- Re-Entry to Foster Care (repeat removals) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that when children leave foster care they are placed in a stable and safe environment so that they do not have to return to care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of re-entry, consequently improvement in finding stability of permanent placement for children at custody release Meet PIP goal and ultimately National Standard for CFSR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition planning Training of workers Collaboration with court system and other agencies as necessary Continue to work to strengthen kin support services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each region currently has a plan they are working on to try to reduce re-entry in their region We have also been working to strengthen kinship supports to reduce re-entries from kin as they were 60% of all re-entries and it has been successful 	•	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFSR Data Element-- Placement Stability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce trauma to children caused by placement instability Caseworkers and providers may not understand negative impact on children of placement changes and may not have skills or resources to know how to work through difficult issues with a foster child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caseworker to forestall moves Foster parent retention Reduction in number of placements children experience while in care Meet PIP goal and ultimately National Standard for CFSR Strategies and resources are available to workers to help them prevent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition planning Training of caseworkers, foster parents, and residential/contract providers Practice guidelines related to what must be done prior to making a placement change Evaluation of whether DCFS should continue to use initial shelter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are currently working on setting up ways to evaluate our residential/contract providers We are working on a packet to help workers understand how to document placements completely and accurately in the system Each region has a plan to work toward reducing placements 	•	•

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		unnecessary placement changes	placements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of residential/contract providers 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposeful visiting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caseworkers need to understand how visits make a difference for families Children and families need frequent purposeful visits with each other when working towards reunification Children and families need frequent purposeful visits with caseworkers to ensure child safety and facilitate progress towards goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced skills of caseworker Caseworkers have enhanced skills so that visits are always purposeful Enhanced skills of caseworker Caseworkers understand how visits make a difference for families Families reunify at a higher rate with better skills regarding working with their children, and permanency maintains Address the needs of parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Well-Being						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substance Abuse (higher percentage of removals) Domestic Violence Mental Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term view and definition of change within the family To provide services to families with these type of chronic and severe issues in order to improve permanency, safety, and well-being for the children and families Timeliness of services and treatment for families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caseworkers have latest information and connection to resources to maximize families' capacity to cope with SA, DV, or MH needs and to nurture children in a safe environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of caseworkers in SA, DV, MH issues Collaboration with other governmental agencies and community to set up services needed Exploration of grant monies that could be used toward programs for these families Utilize funding resources and utilize 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

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			initial involvement with families to access treatment and help families through crises <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review contracts for specific services			
Partnering						
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tribes• Courts• Minority communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CFSR areas of emphasis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze issues with the courts (subset group that works with the courts toward better communication with the courts)• Recognizing tribes as partners• Teaming• Partnering with the professional community• Developing and building on relationships with minority communities• Recruitment of minority workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•